

**The assemble of foules.**

**Here foloweth the assemble of foules veray pleas  
saunt and compendious to rote or here compyled by  
the preclared and famous clerke Geoffrey Chaucer.**



**R**oberte Coplande boke prynter to newe fanglers.

**N**ewes/newes/newes/haue ye ony newes  
Whyn eres ake/to here you call and crye  
Ben bokes made with whystelynge and whewes  
Ben there not yet ynow to your fantasye  
In fayth nay I trow and yet haue ye dayly  
Of maters sadde/and eke of apes and onles  
But yet for your pleasure/thusmoche do wyll I  
As to lette you here the parliament of foules.

**C**haucer is deed the whiche this pamphlete wrote  
So ben his heyes in all suche besynesse  
And gone is also the famous clerke Lydgate  
And so is yonge Hawes/god theyr soules adresse  
Many were the volumes þe they made more & lesse  
Theyr bokes ye lay by/till that the lether moules  
But yet for your myndes this boke I wyll impresse  
That is in tytule the parlyament of foules

**S**o many lerned at leest they say they be  
Was neuer sene/doyng so fewe good werkes  
Where is the tyme that they do spende trowe ye  
In prayers:ye/where:in feldes and parkes  
Ye but where be bycomen all the clerkes:  
In flouth and ydlenesse theyr tyme defoules  
For lacke of wytyngge/conteynyngge mozaill sperkes  
I must imprynt the parlyament of foules.

**D**ytees/and letters them can I make my selfe  
Of suche ynowe bey dayly to me brought  
Olde mozaill bokes stonde styll bypon the shelve  
I am in fere they wyll neuer be bought  
Tryfls and toyes they ben the thynges so sought  
Theyr wytes tryndle lyke these stempthe boules  
yet gentyl clerkes folowe hym yrought  
That dyd endyte the parlyament of foules.

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He lyfe so shorte the crafte so longe to lerne  
The assay so hard so sharpe þ̄ cōquerynge  
The syder ioye þ̄ alway syd so yerne  
All this mene I by loue þ̄ my felynge  
Altonyeth so w̄ dredefull workyng  
So soze ywys that whan I on hym thynke  
Not wote I well where that I wake oꝝ wynte.

For all be that I knowe not loue in dede  
He wote how he quyreth folke theyr hye  
Yet happeth me in bokes ofte to rede  
Of his myracles and of his cruell pye  
There rede I well he wyll be lord and sye  
Dare I not say his strokes ben so soze  
But god saue suche a lord I can no more.

Of blage what for luste what for loze  
On bokes rede I ofte as I you tolde  
But why that I spoke not all this yore  
Agon it happed me for to beholde  
Upon a boke was wyte with letters olde  
And there vpon a certayne thyng to lerne  
The longe day I radde full fast and yerne.

For out of olde feldeg as men sayth  
Cometh all this newe coꝛne fro yere to yere  
And out of olde bokes in good fayth  
Cometh all this newe scyence that men lere  
But now to purpose of my fyrst matere  
To rede forth gan me to delyte  
That all the day thought me but a lyte.



This booke of Whiche I may make mencyon  
Entytuled Was all there I shall you tell  
Cullius of the dreame of the Cyppon  
Chappytrees is had. by. of heuen and hell  
And erthe and soules that therin dwell  
Of whiche as shortly as I can trete  
Of his sentence I wyll tell the grete.

First telleth it whan Cyppon was come  
Into Aufryke how he mette Messymyse  
That hym for ioye in armes hath enome  
Than telleth he her speche and all the blysse  
That was byt wene them tyll the day gan myse  
And how his auncestre aufryan so dere  
Can on his depe that nyght to hym appere.

Then tolde he hym that fro a sterry place  
How Aufryan hath hym cartage shewen  
And warned hym before all his grace  
And sayd to hym what man lerned or lewed  
That loueth comune profyte well ythelwed  
He shall vnto a blyssfull place wende  
There ioye is that lasteth without ende.

Then asked he yf the folke that here be dede  
Haue lyfe and dwellynge in an other place  
And Aufryan sayd ye withoute drede  
And oure present worldes lyues space  
Meneth but a maner dethe what may we trace  
And ryghtfull folke shall go whan they dye  
To heuen and shewen hym the galye.



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**T**han she wedd he hym the lytell erthe that here is  
At regarde of heuens quantyte  
And she wedd hym the nyne sperys  
And after that the melodye herde he  
That cometh of chylike sperys chyres thre  
That well is of musyke and melodye  
In this worlde and cause of armonye.

**T**han bade he hym se the erthe that is so lyte  
And was somdell full of harde grace  
That he ne shulde hym in the worlde delyte  
Than tolde he hym in certayne yeres space  
That euery sterre shulde come into his place  
There it was fyrste and all shall our of mynde  
That in this worlde was done of all mankynde.

**T**han prayed he Cypyon to tell hym all  
The waye to come to heuens blyss  
And he sayd knowe thyselfe fyrst mortall  
And loke ap besyly thou worke and wyse  
To comune profyte and thou shalt neuer myse  
To come wyfely vnto that place bere  
That full of blyss is and soules clere.

**B**ut byekers of ehe lawe sothe for to sayne  
And lecherous folke after that they ben deed  
Shall alwaye whyrle aboute the erthe in payne  
Tyll many a worlde be passed out of orde  
And than forgyuen them all they wycked dede  
Than shall they come vnto that blyssfull place  
To the whiche to come god sende yche louer grace.  
A.iiij.

The day gan fayle and the derke nyght  
That reueth bestes from theyr busynesse  
Byrefte me my boke for lacke of lycht  
And to my bed / I gan me for to dresse  
Fulfylled of thought and busy heuynesse  
For bothe I had thynges whiche that I nolde  
And eke I ne had thynges that I wolde.

But fynally my spyryte at the laste  
For wery of my labour all the daye  
Toke rest that made me to slepe faste  
And in my slepe I mette as I lay  
How Austryan ryght in that selfe aray  
That Cypyon hym sawe before that tyde  
Was comen and stode ryght at my beddes syde.

The wery hunter slepyng in his bed  
To woode agayne his mynde gothe anone  
The iudge dremeth how his pleyes be sped  
The carter dremeth how his cartes gone  
The knyght of golde the knyght fygth with his lone  
The seke meteth he dremeth of the towe  
The louer meteth he hathe his lady wonne.

Can I not say yf that the cause were  
For I red had of Austryan before  
That metrome that he stode there  
But thus sayd he thou hast the so well bozne  
In lokyng of myne olde boke all to towe  
Of whiche Macrobye rought not a lyte  
That somdele of thy labour wolde I the quyte.

Cytherea thou blyssfull lady swete  
That with thy fyry bronde dauntest whomme þe leste  
And madest me this sweuen for to mete  
Be thou my helpe in this for thou mayste beste  
As wysly as I sawe the north north west  
Whan I beganne my sweuen for to wyte  
So geue me myght to ryme and to endyte.

This foresayd Austryen me hente anone  
And forth with hym vnto a gate broughe  
Byght of a parke walled with great stone  
And ouer the gate with letters large ywrought  
There were verses wyten as me thought  
On eyther halfe of full great dyfference  
Of whiche I shall you saye the playne sentence.

Thrughe me men go into that blyssfull place  
Of hertes hele and deedly woundes cure  
Thrughe me men go vnto the well of grace  
There grene and lusty Maye shall cuer endure  
This is the waye to all good auenture  
Be glad thou rede and thy sorowe of caste  
All open ain I passe in and bye the faste.

Thrughe me men go than spake that other syde  
Unto the mortall stroke of the spere  
Of whiche dysdayne and daunger is the gyde  
There tree shall neuer leues bere  
This streame you ledeth vnto the sorowfull mere  
There as the fyssh in pryson is all dyre  
The eschewynge is the remedy.



**T**hese verses of golde and blacke wyten were  
Of whiche I gan a stounde to beholde  
For with that one encreased ay my fere  
And with that other gan myne herte to bolde  
That one me hette that other dyd me colde  
No wytte had I for erroure for to chese  
To entre oꝝ fle oꝝ me to saue oꝝ lese.

**R**yght as bytwene Adamantes two  
Of euen myght a ppece of yron sette  
That hathe no myght to meue to ne fro  
For what that one may hale that other lette  
So fared I that I ne wylt where that me was bette  
To entre oꝝ leue tyll Austrean my gyde  
We hente and chose in at the gates wyde.

**A**nd sayd it standeth wyten in thy face  
Thyne erroure thoughe thou tell it not to me  
But dyede the not to come into this place  
For this wytyng is nothyng ment by the  
He by none but he loues seruaunt be  
For thou o' loue ha'e lost thy tast I gesse  
As seke man hathe of swete and bytternesse.

**B**ut nethles all though thou be dull  
That thou can not do yet may thou se  
For many a man that may not stande a pull  
yet lyketh hym at the wastlyng for to be  
And demeth yet whether he do bette oꝝ he  
And yf thou hau: conunge for to endyte  
I shall the sly we mater of to wyte.

**A**nd with that my hande in his he toke anone  
Of whiche I conforthe caught and went in faste  
But lord so I was glad and well bygone  
For ouer all where I myne eyes caste  
Were trees clad with leues that aye shall laste  
Eche in his kynde with coloure freshe and grene  
As emeraude that ioye was to sene.

**T**he bylder oke and eke the hardy ashe  
The pyler elme / the cofer vnto carayne  
The bore pype tree / holme to whyppe lasse  
The sayle yerde fyre / the cypresse dethe to playne  
The shoter ewe / the aspe for shaftes playne  
The olyue of peas and eke the dronken vyne  
The victor palme the laurer to deuyne.

**A** garden sawe I full of bloomed bowis  
Upon a ryuer in a grene mede  
There as wetenes euermore ynoughe is  
With floures whyte blew yelow and rede  
And colde well streynes nothynge deed  
And swymmyng full of small fyshes lyght  
With fynnes reed and scales syluer byght.

**O**n every bough the byrdes herde I syng  
With voyce of angell in theyr armonye  
That busped them theyr byrdes forth to byng  
The lytell conyes to theyr play gan hie  
And further aboute I gan espye  
The drefull roo the bukke the herte and hynde  
Squyrell and beestes small of gentyll kynde.

On instrumentes of stryng in a corde  
Herde I so playe and rauyshyng Wetenesse  
That god that maker is of all and lord  
Ne herde neuer better as I gesse  
Ther with a wynde vneth it myght be lesse  
Made in the leues grene a noyse softe  
Acordynge to the foules songe on losse.

The ayre of that place so attempted was  
That neuer was greuaunce therof hote ne colde  
There groweth euery holsome spyce and gras  
No man may there were seke ne olde  
Yet was there moze ioye a thousande folde  
No man can tell neuer wolde it nyght  
But ay clere day to ony mannes syght.

Under a tree besyde a Well I saye  
Cupide our lord his arowes forge and fyle  
And at his fete his bowe all redy laye  
And Wyll his doughter tempered all the wyple  
The hedes in the well and with a harde fyle  
She couched them after as they shulde serue  
Some to sle and some to wounde and kerue.

Tho was I ware of pleasaunce anone ryght  
And of araye and lust and curtesye  
And of the crafte that can and hath the myght  
To go before a wyght and to do folpe  
Dyspygured was she I shall not lye  
And by hymselfe vnder an oke I gesse  
Sawe I Delyte that stode with Gentylnesse.



I sawe beaute without ony alyze  
And youghes full of game and iolyte  
foole hardynesse flattery and desyre  
Massagerie meede and other thye  
Theyr names shall not be tolde for me  
And vpon pylers great of iasper longe  
I sawe a temple of bras founded stronge.

Aboute the temple daunced alway  
Women ynowe of whiche some were  
fayre of themselves and some of them gay  
In kyrtles all dyscheueled went they there  
That was theyr offyce alway fro yere to yere  
And on the temple sawe I whyte and fayre  
Of douues whyte many an hundreth payre.

Before the temple doore full sobryte  
Dame peas sate a curtayne in her honde  
And her besyde wonder dyscretlye  
Dame Pacyence syttyng there I fonde  
With face pale vpon an hyll of sonde  
And alder nexte within and withoute  
Behest and arte and of theyr folke a route.

Within the temple with syghes hote as fyre  
I herde a syghe that gan aboute renne  
Whiche syghes were engendred with desyre  
That made euery auter for to brenne  
Of newe flamme and I espyed thenne  
That all the cause of sorowes that they dye  
Come of the bytter goddess Ialousye.

**T**he god Pyrapus saue I as I wente  
Within the temple in souerayne place stande  
In suche aray as whan the alle hym shente  
With crye by nyght and with his ceptre in hande  
Full besply men ganne assaye and fonde  
Upon his heed to sette of sondry beue,  
Garlandes full of freshe floures newe.

**A**nd in a pryuy corner in dysporte  
I founde I Venus and her porter ryche  
That was full noble and hauteyne of her porte  
Dyrke was that place and afterwarde lyghtnesse  
I saue a lyte bnneth it myght be lesse  
And on a bedde of golde she laye to reste  
Tyll that the hote sonne gan to the west.

**H**er gylte heers with a golde threed  
I bounden were bntressed as she laye  
And naked fro the brest vnto the heed  
When myght her se and sothly for to say  
The remanent couered well to my pay  
Byght with a subtyll keuerchelle of balence  
There was no thycker clothe of defence.

**T**he place gaue a thousande sauoures wote  
And Bacchus god of wyne late her besyde  
And Ceres nexte that dothe of hunger bote  
And as I sayd amydde lay Cupyde  
To whome on knes the yonge folkes cryde  
To be thep; helpe but thus I let her lye  
And sercher in the temple I gan espye.

That in despyte of Dyane the chaste  
Full many a bowe ybroke hanged on the wall  
Of maydens suche as gan they tymes waste  
In her seruyte and peynted ouer all  
Of many a story of whiche I touche shall  
A fewe as of Calyrte and Athalante  
And many a mayde of whiche the name I wante.

Semiramus Candace and Hercules  
Byblys Dido Tesbe and Piramus  
Trystram yfoude Parys and Achylles  
Heleyne Cleopatre and Troilus  
Sylla and eke the mother Romulus  
All these were paynted on that other syde  
And all they loue and in what plyte they dyed.

Whan I was come agayne into that place  
That I of spake that was so wete and grene  
Forthe walked I tho my selfe to solace  
Tho was I ware where there sate a quene  
That as of lyght the somer sonne shene  
Passeth the sterre ryght so ouer mesure  
She fayrer was than ony creature.

And in a launde vpon an hyll of flowres  
Was set this noble goddes of nature  
Of braunches were her halles & her bowres  
Ywrought after her crafte and her mesure  
Ne there was foule that cometh of engendure  
That thcre ne were preste in her presence  
To take her dome and gyue her audyence.



For this was on saynt Valentynes day  
Whan euery foule cometh there to chosse his make  
Of euery kynde that men thynke maye  
And that so hurre a noyse gan they make  
That erthe see and tree and euery lake  
So full was that bnneth was other space  
For me to stande so full was euery place.

And ryght as Mayne in the pleynt of kynde  
Deuyseth nature of suche araye and face  
In suche araye men myght her there fynde  
This noble emperesse full of grace  
Bade euery foule to take her owne place  
As they were wonte alway fro yere to yere  
On saynt Valentynes day to stande there

That is to saye the foules of rauyne  
Were hyghest set and than the foules smale  
That eten as nature wolde enclyne  
As worme oz thynge of whiche I tell no tale  
But water foule late lowest in the dale  
And foule that lyucth by sede late on the grene  
And that so many that wonder was to sene.

There myght men the royall egle fynde  
That with his sharpe loke perceth the sonne  
And other egles of a lower kynde  
Of whiche that clerkes well deuysen konne  
There was the tyraunte with his fethers donne  
And grene I mene the goshaue that dothe payne  
To byrdes for his outragvous rauayne.

The gentyll faucon that With his fote dystreyneþ  
The kynges hande / the sperhauke eke  
The quayles so the merlyon that peyneþ  
Hymselfe fullofte the lark for so lke  
There Was the doue With her eyes meke  
The icloude swanne ayenst his dethe that syngeth  
The oule eke that of dethe the bode byngeth.

The crane the geaunte With his trompes ledone  
The thefe the choughe and eke þe ianglynge pye  
The scoynge iaye the egles so herowne  
The fals lapwynge full of trechery  
The stare that the counseyle gan be wyse  
The tame ruddoke and the colwarde kyte  
The cocke that ozologe is of thozpes lyte.

The sparowe Venus sone / the nyghtyngale  
That clepyth forth the freshe leues newe  
The swalowe morder of the foules smale  
That maken honp of floures freshe of hewe  
The wedded turtle With his herte trewe  
The peecocke with his angels fethers byghe  
The felaunte scozner of the cocke by nyght.

The waker goes the cuckowe euer wynde  
The popynay full of delysye  
The drake scozner of his owne kynde  
The storke waker of auowtrye  
The hote cozmeraute of glotenye  
The rauon and the crowe with her boyte of care  
The throstle olde and the frosty feldfare.

What shulde I say of foules every kynde  
That in this worlde haue fethers and stature  
When myght in that place assembled synde  
Before that noble goddess of nature  
And yche of them dyd his besy cure  
Benyngly to chose or for to take  
By her acorde his for mell or his make.

But to the poynt nature helde on her honde  
A for mall egle of shape the gentyllest  
That euer she ymonge her workes fonde  
The most benynge and goodlyest  
In her was every vertue at his rest  
So fer for the that nature her selfe had blyss  
To loke on her and ofte her beke to kysse.

Nature the byker of the almyghty lorde  
That hore colde heuy lpyght moyste and drye  
Hathe knyrtte by even nombre of a corde  
In els boyce began to speke and saye  
Foules take hede of my sentence I praye  
And for your ease in furtherynge of your nede  
As fast as I may speke I wyll me spede.

Ye knowe well how on saynt Valentynes day  
By my stature and thurgh my gouernaunce  
Ye come for to chose and fle your way  
With your makes as I prycke you with plesaunce  
But nethles my ryghtfull gouernaunce  
May I not let for all this worlde to wyne  
That he that most is worthy shall begynne.



The tercell egle as that ye knowen well  
The foule royall aboute you all in degre  
The wyse and worthy the secrete true as stele  
The whiche I haue fourmed as ye may se  
In euery parte as it best lyketh me  
It nedeth not his shappe you to deuyle  
He shall fyrst chose and speke in his gyse.

And after hym by ordre shall ye chese  
After your kynde eueryche as you lyketh  
And as your hadde is shall ye wyne or lese  
But whiche of you that loue moste entyket  
God sende hym her that soest for hym syket  
And therwithall the tercell gan she calle  
And sayd my sone the choyse is to you yfalle.

But netheles in this condycyon  
Must be the choyse of eueryche that is here  
That she agre to his eleccyon  
Who so he be that shulde be her fere  
This is oure blage alway fro yere to yere  
And who so maye at this tyme haue his grace  
In blyssfull tyme he came into this place.

With heed enclyned and with full humble chere  
This royall tercell spake and taryed nought  
Unto my souereygne lady and not my fere  
I chese and chesse with wyll and herte and thought  
The formell on your hande so well I wrought  
Whose I am all and euer wyll her serue  
Do what her lust to do me lyue or sterue.

The p. of fou.

B. i.

Besechynge her of mercy and of grace  
As she that is my lady souerayne  
O let me dye present in this place  
For certes longe may I not lyue in payne  
For in myne herte is kowen euery beynne  
Hauynge rewarde onely to my truthe  
My dere herte haue on my wo some ruthe.

And yf I be founde to her vntrewe  
Dysobeysaunte or wyllfull neglygent  
Auauntour or in processe loue a newe  
I pray to you this be my iudgment  
That with these foules I be all to rent  
That ylike day that euer she me fynde  
To her vntrewe or in my gylte vnkynde.

And syth that none loueth her so well as I  
All thoughe she neuer of loue behette  
Than ought she be myne thzugh her mercy  
For other bonde can I none on her knette  
For neuer for no wo ne shall I lette  
To serue her how ferre so that she wende  
Say what thou lest my tale is an ende.

Byght as the freshe red rose newe  
Spent the somer sonne coloured is  
Byght so for shame all weren gan the hewe  
Of this foxmell whan she herde all this  
Neyther she answered well ne sayd amys  
So soze abasshed was she tyll that nature  
Sayd doughter drede you not I you assure.

Another tercell egle spake anone  
Of lowe kynde and sayd that shulde not be  
I loue her better than ye do by saynt Iohan  
Or at lest I loue her as well as ye  
And lenger haue serued her in my degre  
And yf she shulde haue loued for longe lounge  
To me alone had be the guardounge.

I dare eke say yf she me synde fals  
Unkynde iangler or rebell ony wyse  
Or ialouie do me hange by the hals  
And but I bere me in her seruple  
As well as my wytte can me suffyse  
For poynnt to poynnt her honoure for to saue  
Take she my lyfe and all the good I haue.

The thyrde tercell egle answered tho  
How syrs ye se the lytell layler here  
For euery soule cryeth out to be ago  
For the with his make or with his lady dere  
And eke herselfe wyll nought here  
For taryenge her not halfe that I wolde say  
And but I speke I must for sorowde dey.

Of longe seruyce auunte I me nothyng  
But as possyble is me to dye to day  
For wo as he that hathe be languyshyng  
These twenty wynter and well happen may  
A man may serue better and more to pay  
In halfe a yere though it were no more  
Than some man dothe that hathe serued full yere.



I ne say not this by me for I ne can  
Do no serupce that may my lady please  
But I dare say I am her truest man  
As to my dome and faynest wolde her please  
At shorte wordes tell that bethe me selfe  
I wyll be hers wheder I walke or wynte  
And true in all that herte may bethynke.

Of all my lyfe syth that day I was bozne  
So gentyll ple in loue or other thyng  
As herde I neuer no man me before  
Who that had leyser and connyng  
For to rehers her chere and her spekyng  
And from the morowe gan this speche laste  
Tyll do wne ward wente the soune wonder faste

The noyse of fowles for to be deliuered  
So loude range haue doone and let vs wende  
That well wende I the wood all to shpyered  
Come of they cryed alas ye wyll vs shende  
Whan shall your cursed pledynge haue an ende  
How shulde a iudge eyther party leue  
For ye or nay without ony proue.

The goos the ducke and the crikke also  
So cryed keke keke crikke we queke queke hye  
That thugh myn eeres the noyse wente tho  
The goos sayd tho all this nys worthe a fye  
But I can shape hereof a remedye  
And wyll say my verdyte fayre and swythe  
For water foule who so be sad or blythe.

And I for worme soule sayd the soule cuckoo  
For I wyll of myne owne auctoryte  
For comune speede take on me the charge now  
For to deliuer vs is great charyte  
Ye may abyde a while yet parde  
Quod the turtle yf be your wyll  
A whyght may speke hym were as good be still.

I am a fede soule one the vnworthepest  
That wote I well and ytell of conynge  
But better is that a whyghtes tongue rest  
Then entremete hym of iuche doyng  
Of whiche he neyther rede can nor syng  
And who so dothe full soule hymselfe acloseth  
For offyce vncommytted ofte anoyeth.

Nature whiche that alway had an ere  
To murmure of the lewdnesse behynde  
With faconde voyce sayd/ holde your tongues there  
And I shall soone I hope a counsell fynde  
You for to deliuer and from this noyle vnbynde  
I iudge of euery folke men shall one call  
To say the verdyte of you soules all.

Assented were to this conclusyon  
The byrdes all/ and foules of rauyne  
Haue chosen fyrst by playne eleccyon  
The tercelet of the faucon to dysfyne  
All her sentence and as hym lust to termyne  
And to nature hym they dyd present  
And she accepteth hym with glad entent.

The assem. of fou.

B. iij.

The tercelet sayd then in manere  
Full harde were it to proue it by reason  
Who loueth beste this gentyll formell here  
For eueryche hath suche replycacyon  
That by skylles may none be brought adoune  
I can not se that argumentes auayle  
Then semeth it there must be batayle.

All redy quod this egles tercelles tho  
Ray syrs quod he yf that I durst it say  
ye do me wronge my tale is not ydo  
For syrs taketh not a grefe I pray  
It may not as ye wolde in this way  
Ours is the boyce that haue the charge in honde  
And to the iudges dome ye must stonde.

And therfore I say as to my wyf  
We wolde thynke how that the worthiest  
Of knyghthode and lengest had bled it  
Most of estate of blode the gentyllest  
Were syttinge to her yf that her lest  
And of these thyn she wote her selfe I trowe  
Whiche that he be / so it is lyght to knowe.

The water foules haue theyr hedes layde  
Togeder and of shorte auysment  
Whan eueryche had his large golde sayde  
They sayd sothely all by one assent  
How that the goos with her faconde gent  
That so desyret to pronounce our nede  
Shall tell our tale and prayed to god her spede.



And for these water foules tho began  
The goos to speke and in her cakelynge  
She sayd pes now take kepe euery man  
And herken whiche a reason I shall forth bynge  
My wytte is sharpe I loue no tarynge  
I say I reede hym though he were my brother  
But she wyll loue hym let hym loue another.

Lo here a perfyte reson of a goos  
Quod the sperhauke neuer mote she the  
Lo suche it is to haue a tongue loos  
Now parde folle it were better for the  
Haue holde thy peas then she wed thy nyctete  
Ielyeth not in his wytte nor in his wyll  
But sothe is sayd a foole can not be styll.

The laughter arose of gentyll foules all  
And ryght arone the sedde foules chosen had  
The turtle true and dyd her to them call  
And prayed her to saye the sothe sad  
Of this matre and asked what she rad  
And she answered that playnly her intent  
She wolde she we and sothly what she ment.

Now god forbode a louer shulde chaunge  
The turtle sayd and were for shame all reed  
Though that his lady euermore be straunge  
yet lete hym serue her alway tyll he be deed  
For sothe I prayse nought the gooses reed  
For though she dyed I wolde not other make  
I wyll be hers tyll that she dothe me take.

Well bourded quod the ducke by my hat  
That men shulde loue alway causelesse  
Who can a reason fynde oꝝ wytte in that  
Daunceth he mery that is myꝝthlesse  
Who shulde recke of that is rechelesse  
Ye queke quod the ducke full well and saye  
There he mo sterres god wote than a paye.

Now fy choyle quod the gentyll tercellette  
Out of the donghyll came that worde full ryght  
Thou canste not se whiche thyng is well bysette  
Thou farest by loue as owles do by lyght  
The day them blyndeth full well they se by nyght  
Thy kynde is of so lowe a wretchednesse  
That what loue is thou canst not se noꝝ gette

Tho gan the cuckow put hymselfe in peas  
For foule that eteth worme and sayd as blyue  
So I quod he may haue my make in peas  
I recke not how longe that ye stryue  
Let yche of them be soleyne all theyꝝ lyue  
This is my reed syth they may not acorde  
This shorte lesson nedeth not recoꝝde.

ye haue the gloton fylled ynoughe his paunche  
Than are we well sayd the emerlyon  
Thou murderer of hayloge on the braunche  
That brought the forth thou rusfull gloton  
Lyue thou soleyne wormes corrupcyon  
For no force is for lacke of thy nature  
Go lewde be thou whyle thy lyfe may dure.

Now pray quod nature I commaunde here  
For I haue herde all your oppynion  
And in effecte yet be we neuer the nere  
But fynally this is my conclusyon  
That she herselfe shall haue her eleccyon  
Of whome her lust who so be wothe or blythe  
Hym that she cheseth he shall haue her as swythe.

For syth it may not here dyscussed be  
Who loueth her best as sayd the tercelet  
Than wyll I do this fauoure to her that she  
Shall haue ryght hym on whom her herte is set  
And he her that his herte hath on her knet  
This iudge I nature for I may not lye  
To none estate I haue none other eye.

But as for counseyle to chese a make  
yf I were reason than wolde I  
Counseyle you the royall tercell take  
As sayd the tercelet full skylfully  
As for the gentyllest and most worthy  
Whiche I haue wrought so well to my plesauce  
That it ought to be to you a suffysaunce.

With dzedefull voyce the foxmell her answerde  
My ryght full lady goddes of nature  
Sothe is that I am euer vnder your yerde  
As is euery other creature  
And must be poures whyle my lyfe may endure  
And therfore graunte me my fyrst boone  
And myne entent I shall you say ryght soone



I graunte it you quod she and ryght anone  
This formell eggle spake in this degre  
Almyghty quene vnto this yere be done  
I aske respyte for to aduylse me  
And after that to haue my choyse all fre  
This is all and some that I wolde speke and sey  
Ye gete no more all though ye do me dey.

I wyll not serue Venus ne Cupyde  
For sothe as yet by no maner way  
Now syth it may none other wayes betyde  
Quod nature here is no more to say  
Than wolke I that these foules were alway  
yche with his make for taryenge longer here  
And sayd them thus as ye shall after here.

To you speke I ye tercelettes sayd nature  
Be of good herte and serue ye all thye  
I yere is not so longe to endure  
And yche of you payne hym in his degre  
For to do well for god wote quyte is she  
fro you this yere what after so befall  
This extremelle is dressed fro you all.

And whan this werke all wrought was to an ende  
To euery soule nature gaue his make  
By euen acorde and on theyr way they wende  
A lorde the blythe and ioye that they make  
For yche of them gan other in wynges take  
And with theyr neckes yche gan other wynde  
Thankynge alway the noble goddes of kynde

But fyrst Were there chosen foules for to synge  
As yere by yere was alway theyr blaunce  
To synge a roundell at theyr departynge  
To do Nature honoure and plesaunce  
The note I trouwe ymaked was in Fraunce  
The wordes were suche as ye may here fynde  
The nexte verse as I now haue in mynde.

**C**Que bien ayme atard oblye.

And with theyr shoutynge when theyr songe was do  
That foules made at theyr flyght alway  
I woke and other bokes toke me to  
To rede vpon and yet I rede alway  
I hope ywys to rede so some day  
That I shall mete some thynge for to fare  
The better and thus to rede I wyll not spare.

**E**xPLICIT tractatus de congregatione volucrum  
die sancte Valentini.

**T**hus endeth the congregacyon of foules  
on saynt Valentynes day.

**C**enuoy of R. Coplande boke prynter.

**H**ylde vpon thyselfe/in leues all to torne  
With letters dymme/almost defaced clene  
Thy hyllynge rotte/with wormes all to woyme  
Thou lay/that pyte it was to sene  
Bounde with olde quayres/for aenge all hooze & grene  
Thy mater endorimed/for lacke of thy presence  
But nowe thou arte losed/go shewe forth thy sentece

And where thou become so ordze thy language  
That in excuse thy prynter loke thou haue  
Whiche hath the kepte frome ruynous damage  
In suowe swyte paper/thy mater for to saue  
With thylke same langage that Chaucer to the gaue  
In termes olde/of sentence clered newe  
Tha methem moche sweter/who ca his myde auewe.

And yf a louer happen on the to rede  
Let be the goos with his lewde sentence  
Unto the turtle and not to her to take hede  
For who sothaungeth/true loue dothe offence  
Loue as I rede is floure of excellence  
And loue also is rote of wretchednesse  
Thus be two loues/scripiture bereth wytnesse.

**C**inis.

**I**mprynted in london in flete strete at the sygne of  
the Sonne agaynste the condyte/by me Wynkyn de  
Werde. The. xxiij. day of January/in the yere of our  
lorde. m. cccc. & xxx.



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